

Cor Series: New Recruits

by Dimira Marka

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Summary: Part one of the Cor Series. The X-Men go on a rescue mission and gain two new members.

Cor Series: New Recruits

> <meta name="GENERATOR"> New Recruits

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> I am stating once again, the characters Marcus Cor, Stephanie Cor, Eva Cor, the family of the Cors' mentioned, and Shout are MINE. Don't take them. New Recruits was originally written in summer of 1999 and was re-written in March of 2000 by Dimira Marka.<br>

New Recruits

> <font>First installment in the Cor Series

> By Dimira Marka [[dimira\\_99@yahoo.com](mailto:dimira_99@yahoo.com)]<br>

> --<p>

Prologue

> <br> Remy pulled down the long driveway lined with trees. He glanced over to his brother Marcus in the passenger's seat and then up at the rearview mirror. He looked into the back seat at Ororo Munroe, the platinum haired, Kenyan goddess that they had both come to love like a sister. She looked at him, as if to say, 'Why can't I stay with you?' Both Marcus and Remy felt horrible when they saw the look on her face.

> <br> She was no longer the child that the shadow king had turned her into, but she was still young, and didn't want to return to the

stuffy halls of Professor Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters, yet. She still wanted to see the world. She was better off, though, coming back. She didn't need to be hung up with the guild or them, two worthless criminals, any more than she was.

> <br> "Dis da place, Stormy?" Remy asked, looking back at the road. Before them was an imposing brick building. He stopped the car near the large oak doors. They didn't notice as the doors opened.

> <br> "Yes," she replied sullenly, she did not move. Remy began to get out of the car.

> <br> "Ororo, hon, this is for the best. Ya don't need ta be mixed up with us anymore then ya have already. It's too dangerous," Marcus said and looked back at her.

> <br> "I am not scared," she said, looking him directly in the eyes hoping that her expression would change his mind. He had always seemed to have a soft spot for her more than Remy did. He was more likely to give in and not take her back to the school.

> <br> "Well, I am. It's for th' best," Marcus said. He turned and got out of the car. He saw a man in a wheel chair at the door of the school, a tall redhead, and toes, and a man in dark sunglasses. They looked at him curiously. Remy was already out of the car, and then Ororo got out.

> <br> "Storm!" cried the woman and ran to her. They hugged. The three men came over to her.

> <br> "Yes, I am home," she said. The woman motioned to Remy and Marcus with her head. "Oh, yes, this is Marcus Cor and this is Remy LeBeau. They are the ones who saved me from the Shadow King."

> <br> The man in the wheel chair spoke, "We can't thank you enough for this."

> <br> "It was not'ing, homme," said Remy. The bald man looked up at Ororo, and Marcus and Remy both saw the signs of a telepathic conversation going on, Marcus being a telepath himself. They waited for a moment. The man in sunglasses was looking at them suspiciously.

> <br> "Mr. Cor, Mr. LeBeau, I have a proposition for you, if you would accompany my colleagues and myself inside," said the bald man.

> <br> "Uh, yeah," Remy looked at Marcus, who shrugged. They followed Ororo and the bald man into the school, followed by the others.

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Eva sat at her desk. All of the students in her college advanced genetics class concentrated on their long, seemingly endless test. Eva brushed a lock of silvery white hair from her eyes as they glanced over the students again from her vantage point, all forty-two of them.

> <br> Eva was a mutant; she could manipulate magnetism. She could control anything remotely metal and as luck would have it, she could read the minds of others as well. Her twin brother and twin sister, being that they all are triplets, were the same as she.

> <br> Eva turned her head back to the letter in her hand. It was from her brother, Marcus and her adoptive brother, Remy. She hadn't gotten a letter from them in nearly 8 months. She slid a long, manicured talon under the envelope's seal and removed the piece of paper inside. Her light blue and silver-specked eyes read ever inch of the paper eagerly.

> <br> (( Dear Eva,

> Bonjour, Evie, sorry its been so long, but we've had a lot to do. As I told you in the last letter, Remy has taken in an apprentice by

the name of Ororo Munroe. However, we have recently taken her back to her home in New York. Long story short, we are now living at the Professor Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters. The school's headmaster, Professor Charles Xavier, has a sort of team of mutants he calls the X-Men. It's an amazing job to say the least...)) <br>

> Eva stopped reading, and almost breathing. <em>Charles Xavier!?

That good for nothing lunatic! Oh, God, I've ta get ta Mark and Remy! They must not know he works for Sinister!<em> Eva's thought were cut off by a scream. She looked up, staring in horror. Scalphunter, Archlight, Vertigo, Sabertooth, Riptide, Shout, and Scrambler stood in the door of her classroom. Scalphunter had one of the students in his arms, and a knife to her neck. Eva jumped to her feet. "Everyone get down!" she cried to her students.

> <br> "Miss us, Evie, baby?" asked Scalphunter.

> <br> Eva shuddered at his voice. "Let her go, please, Scalphunter, ya don't want her, ya wan' me!" Eva screamed at him over the crying out of the other students.

> <br> "I dunno, babe, she's kida cute." He licked the side of her face. The girl flinched.

> <br> "Let 'er go, please. She's just a kid." Eva pleaded with him. "Lucas, ya gotta stop this!" she cried at Shout. He looked at her with a bit of pity, then looked to the floor.

> <br> "Fine then, ya coward" she growled. "Take me!" She taunted Scalphunter. She had no intention, however, of letting him -- that dirty, cruel, rapist -- get her again, even if it meant revealing to everyone her mutant powers. Her eyes flared silver. A crooked smile crossed his face.

> <br> "Fine!" Scalphunter threw the girl aside and Vertigo attacked. With her powers to scramble a person's sense of reality, her magnetic powers were useless since she needed to have concentration to control them; Eva was out cold before she could react.

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The X-men sat around the large circular console of the War Room/Ready Room. There was Cyclops, Phoenix, Beast, Iceman, Angel, Morph, Storm, Rogue, Wolverine, Jubilee, Gambit, and Slip. Gambit was Remy LeBeau. Slip, named by his old friends in the Guild of Thieves for his uncanny ability to hide from sight when on the job, was Remy's adoptive brother, Marcus Cor. They had been with the X-Men for only seven months or so, but were fitting in well.

> <br> Professor Xavier was lecturing them all about recent reports of the psychotic mutant Victor Creed. He had been spotted in the New York area. When Slip and Gambit had heard that he was in the area it made their hearts skip a beat. They knew Victor Creed, Sabertooth, all too well.

> <br> "And then there is this," the professor said, holing up a VHS videotape. "It is addressed to you two, Gambit, Slip."

> <br> The brothers glanced at each other. "From?" Slip asked, leaning forward in his seat.

> <br> "There was no return address. The boy who delivered it said the man who had him do it looked like a lion; Sabertooth, no doubt," said Cyclops.

> <br> The two looked at each other, then back at Professor X. "Well, play it," Gambit said.

> <br> "Are you sure you do not wish to view it in private?" Professor X asked.

> <br> "I don' care," Gambit said, glancing at his brother. "Got nutin' ta hide."

> <br> "Me either," said Slip.  
> <br> The Professor nodded and put the tape into a player. The large monitor turned on and the face of Mr. Sinister appeared. The two sat on the edge of their seats. "My children, it is time for you to return to me. You have been gone from me far too long. You can always chose to stay where you are and not to accept my request, however there can and will be consequences."  
> <br> The view of the monitor shifted to two large upright tanks, big enough to fit people into, and there were people in them. Two women, hooked up to machines, floated in the liquid that filled the tanks.  
> <br> "No" Slip whispered.  
> <br> Sinister's face reappeared. "I know how much these two mean to the both of you. I truly dislike resorting to these sorts of tactics, but I am in need of your services. I will not be quite as hard on them if you to come back to me. You have 3 days." The screen went blank.  
> <br> "But Stephie, he killed her!" Gambit looked at Slip. "Whata we gonna do?"  
> <br> "May I ask just what is going on?" asked Cyclops.  
> <br> "Sinister got our sisters," Slip began.  
> <br> "Dr. Eva Cor?" the Professor asked.  
> <br> "Yeah" Remy said quickly. The Beast, Hank McCoy, glanced at the professor.  
> <br> "Let's go, Rem'," Slip said. Gambit stood up and the two were about to go out of the door.  
> <br> "Wait!" Storm called after them, standing up.  
> <br> "What?" Gambit asked, and turned to the X-Men.  
> <br> "We'll come with you. You can't take out Sinister on your own," Cyclops said.  
> <br> "Non, we aren't gonna bring ya inta this," Slip said. "It's not your problem."  
> <br> "You're X-men now. We aren't going to let you take off to kill yourself. You need our help," Phoenix said. Slip and Gambit looked at each other. Phoenix was right. They would get themselves killed alone, or at least caught and held for Sinister for a very long time.  
  
> <br> "Fine then," Slip paused. "Whada ya have in mind?" He asked, heading back in the room; Gambit followed, reluctantly. They sat down at their chairs and Cyclops began to talk.

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Dr. Eva Cor woke up in a strange cell. She realized it wasn't a cell, she was in a strange fluid, and floating. It burned her eyes and skin slightly. She felt something over her face. It was some sort of breathing apparatus. She squinted throughout the fluid. She saw Sinister across the room she was in; she recognized his strange outfit. She attempted to us her powers, to no avail.  
> <br> Then she saw others: Scalphunter, Shout, and all of the other Marauders. She looked to her side and saw another one of the tanks she was in, and there was another person in it. She couldn't see who it was, but she could tell was another woman. \_Oh, God, what does he want from me now? God, I hope Markie and Remy are all right. And my students, I hope they're Okay. If they did anything ta my students, there'll be hell ta pay.\_  
> <br> Eva closed her eyes, for she had begun to feel tired. She knew that feeling; it was the effect of a drug in her body. Oh for the love of God, why does he have to do this? He killed my sister, he's done so much to us. Why can't he just leave us alone? She opened her

eyes one last time to see Sinister's face looking at her through the glass. He smiled malevolently but then the sleep reclaimed her.

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Slip, Gambit, and the X-Men -- Cyclops, Wolverine, Rogue, Beast, Storm, Iceman and Angel -- worked silently through the large heating ducts of Sinister's compound. They stopped at the end of the duct at a large grate. Slip and Gambit peered through the grate and saw the two tanks. They saw Mr. Sinister at a computer console and Vertigo and Shout near the door. The other Marauder's were out of sight. Slip narrowed his eyes at the tanks.

> <br> Two women, so similar in appearance it could not be ignored. \_What in the hell is that bastard up to now?\_ he questioned himself. He glanced at Gambit, then at the other X-Men.

> <br> #Shout and Vertigo are on the north side of the room and Sinister is on the east side. Get Sinister out first and then the Marauders, got it?# he used his telepathy to talk to them. All of the X-Men nodded.

> <br> Cyclops moved up silently to the grate and aimed for Sinister. The optic blast tore through the grate and hit Sinister dead on. All nine of the X-Men dove through the duct and attacked the two Marauders, who were easily taken down by Slip's energy blasts. Slip and Gambit looked at the tanks. Then the other X-men joined them. They all stared at the tanks.

> <br> "That was too damn easy..." Wolverine mumbled.

> <br> "Clones?" asked Rogue hesitantly, putting her hand on Gambit's shoulder.

> <br> "No, they're twins," said Slip "Least I think so..."

> <br> "\_Merede\_", could dat be Stephanie?" Gambit looked at the tanks. He reached out and touched on of them. "I t'ought he kill her..."

> <br> "Who cares, just get 'im out," Slip said.

> <br> Beast - Hank's - voice came from the corner of the room, "I believe this may do it." He pushed a button and the tank's glass retracted and the water, and the women spilled out. They fell limp on the floor, coughing and sputtering, their silvery white hair matted and covering their faces.

> <br> Only one of them actually moved; she tried to push herself up, but her arms gave out from under her and she collapsed. Clinging to their bodies were bands of cloth; one around their bottoms and the other around their chests. Gambit and Slip each went over to one of them.

> <br> Slip turned his sister over, the one who had tried to get up. He could tell by the Star of David necklace that it was Eva. "Evie, Evie, say somthin'!"

> <br> Eva's eyes opened slightly and her mouth opened and moved slightly, but no words came out. \_Markie, that you? Oh, God it is!\_ was her only coherent thought before she slipped back into darkness. Marcus looked at her hand and saw that it was bandaged and bloody.

> <br> "Let us go, people. Sinister is not going to be happy when he wakes," Storm said. Gambit and Slip each picked up the two women and took off for the Black Bird.

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Eva opened her eyes and looked around the room she was in. She was no longer in the tank; she was in a bed. Her hand was throbbing, and she

could feel it was bandaged up. She sat up uneasily and looked at it. It was wrapped up in gauze and was numb. \_What in the hell did he do ta me now? \_

> <br> She peered around the room. Another bed, with another woman, which she ignored; a computer console, a blue furry man. She knew who he was. \_Hank McCoy? Him!? Oh, God, no! She gasped for air. Have ta get outta here\_ she thought and began to get up. The man turned around and smiled.

> <br> "Ah, Dr.Cor..." began Hank. Eva cut him off with a swift energy blast. He let out a yell, and others came running, among them Slip and Gambit.

> <br> "Eva, what are you doing!" yelled Slip. Cyclops and Storm ran over to Hank.

> <br> "That's him! He works for..." Eva sputtered as Gambit seized her shoulders.

> <br> "He's a friend, Ev', that's Hank," he said.

> <br> "I know who he is, damn it!" Eva cried. "That's why I..."

> <br> Hank groaned and sat up with the help of Cyclops, "Please, allow me to explain," he began. "The last time Eva and I met there was a misunderstanding."

> <br> "Misunderstanding! I know exactly what happened! He dug through my mind!" Eva began.

> <br> "And there is a good explanation, if you will allow me to explain," Hank began. Eva's eyes narrowed at him and she crossed her arms, Gambit's hands were still on her shoulders and he now stood behind her.

> <br> "The professor was only probing your mind out of suspicion of you being a mutant. He never meant to offend you," Hank said, now standing up. Without her telepathic powers she could tell he was telling the truth.

> <br> "An' that suposta make it right?" she challenged.

> <br> "Eva, please..." Slip began.

> <br> "No, it does not. However, there are more important things at stake at this point in time, such as your sisters life and yours..."

> <br> "Stephanie!" she gasped. That was when she realized who the woman was on the other bed. She ran over to the bed and looked at her for a second. Then used her good hand to open Stephanie's eye. "Her eyes are dilated. Was she...?" she turned and looked to the others.

> <br> "...Drugged? Yes," Hank said.

> <br> Eva looked around for a moment, confused; then her medical training kicked in. "Did you give her some dilutant, like..."

> <br> As Eva continued, Storm and Cyclops looked at each other. "Think its safe to leave them alone now?" Cyclops asked.

> <br> Storm smiled, "Yes, I think it is safe. Slip and Gambit can handle any more problems." The two turned and walked out. A few minutes of Eva and Hank rattling off medical mumbo-jumbo passed, then Hank led Eva over to a table to begin examining her hand.

> <br> "When'll she wake up?" asked Slip, brushing a lock of hair from Stephanie's face. The skin on her face was pasty and thin from lack of food and sunlight.

> <br> Hank looked up from the small examination table Eva's hand was on, "A few hours, if the drug hasn't done too much damage to her.

> <br> "What do you mean damage?" asked Gambit, getting riled up.

> <br> "Th' drug in her system is very dangerous, it could have lasting effects on her system, depending how long she's had it in her," Eva said. She looked back over at what Hank was doing.

> <br> Eva sighed as he pulled away the bandages on her hand.

Underneath, a system of stitches ran up her hand. It started at her wrist and when it got up to her mid-hand, it branched out to each of her fingers and ended at the tips.

> <br> "Ugghhhh," Eva groaned as she looked at her hand. She tried to move her fingers and realized she couldn't, she could not even feel it.

> <br> "Is there any pain?" Hank asked.

> <br> "I can barely ever feel it," Eva replied.

> <br> "Do you have any idea what he did?" he asked as he looked closer.

> <br> "All I can remember was bein' in that damn tank. I wish I knew what he did." Eva's eyes flared silver, as they did often, an affect of her mutant powers.

> <br> "We'll have to wait until we get back to the mansion before I can do anything more," Hank said and reached for a roll of gauze to wrap her hand in.

> <br> "Speaking of which, where are we exactly?"

> <br> "We are currently on board the Blackbird, an SR-71 Blackbird," Hank said.

> <br> Eva looked at him confused. "Right... And just where are we going?"

> <br> "To Professor Xavier's School for Gifted Mutants, Salem Center New York," Hank said, and began to wrap Eva's hand in gauze. He cut the gauze off and taped it down. A tall black woman with blue eyes and platinum hair came in the door. Ororo Munroe, Eva thought.

> <br> "We are preparing to land," She said simply, she then walked over to Marcus and Remy. "How is she?"

> <br> "Don' know yet, Stormy" Remy said. She -Storm- walked over to the bed and looked at Stephanie. Then walked over to Eva. "Are you all right, Professor Cor?"

> <br> "Yeah, I'll live," she said, "I don't think we've met. Ororo Munroe, right?"

> <br> "Yes," Storm replied. She turned to Remy and Marcus. "I must go and help Cyclops to land the plane."

> <br> "Yeah," said Marcus. Storm walked out of the room.

> <br> A moment passed and Eva got a sinking feeling in her stomach as the plane descended. Then she felt it no more.

> <br> "Come on," Slip said to Eva. She stood up and walked over to Gambit.

> <br> "Gimme yer coat," she ordered him.

> <br> "Huh?" he mumbled questioningly.

> <br> "Look at what I'm wearing," she growled. She referred to the outfit Sinister had her in. It was two tight cloth bands, one across her upper torso and one around her hips and buttocks.

> <br> "Oh, right," he said and slipped his coat off and handed it to her. She pulled it on and buttoned it up.

> <br> Gambit and Slip lead her off of the plane into a large hangar. Several people were walking about and talking many of them stared for a moment at her then began to whisper. Boy, what pleasant place she thought sarcastically and looked back at her brothers. They looked at a door and suddenly stopped, as if they were waiting for someone. Then Eva saw someone out of the corner of her eye, a bald man in a wheelchair. Eva sighed as he approached her, Slip, and Gambit. He was very quickly in front of her.

> <br> "Hello, Dr. Cor, its good to see you again." He held his hand out to shake. Eva realized he must not have seen her hand. She stared icily at him. He cleared his throat. "I must explain my actions..."

> <br> "Don't even. Dr. McCoy already explained it ta me. Its all right, I' m over it now," she said calming down and no longer giving

him the evil eye. Then she heard her name called. It was Hank. Without a word she walked over to where he and one other person--a redhead--were pushing a stretcher with Stephanie on it. Slip, Gambit and Professor X followed her. They then proceeded down a long hall toward the 'Med-Lab'.

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"Well, Dr. Cor, how have you been?" the Professor asked, trying to make conversation as he and Hank examined her hand.

> "Well, I started teachin' advanced genetics and biochemistry at the University of Iowa," she replied and looked at her hand again.<br>

> "So you're a professor?" Hank asked.<br>

> "<em>Oui<em>."

> <br> "And French," Hank said and reached for a towel to dab the blood from her hand.

> <br> "All four o' us are. Only Remy's Cajun and were French-Canadian," she said.

> <br> "Born in Canada?" questioned Hank.

> <br> "And raised, for the most part," she said.

> <br> \_Then they really can't be Magnus's children, he hasn't even ever been to Canada, from what I know\_ thought the professor.

> <br> "How did you meet Gambit, if you don't mind me asking," Professor X said. "It seems odd how you would end up in Louisiana from Canada."

> <br> "Oh, it's a long story..." Eva chuckled. "We ran away and hopped box cars till we made it as far as one could at 14. Remy an' his brother, Henri found us starved and half-dead on the streets. Long story short, their father adopted us."

> <br> "What a rare thing for someone to simply adopt three children he found on the street," Hank said.

> <br> "Yes, we were fortunate enough ta have Jean-Luc find us. It still amazes me how much luck we got."

> <br> "Luck indeed..." Hank leaned back in his chair and pulled off his gloves. Then he removed his glasses. "Well from what I can tell, he removed the skeleton from your hand and replaced it with a metal frame."

> <br> "Ya're not serious are ya?" Eva looked at the expression on his face, "Okay, so ya are."

> <br> "And from what the X-rays tell us, you have some sort of claws," the Professor said handing her the x-rays, "they just haven't made themselves known."

> <br> Eva eyed the x-ray pictures. They were so much clearer than any other she'd ever seen, there were metal cones at the tips; each connected by a thick tendon on each side, from what she could see. She stared at the pictures for a long time. "I knew it, I could feel the metal," she whispered to herself. "Well, another fine demonstration of Sinister's twisted ways," she threw the photographs onto the table. "So, any other surprises ya gonna spring on me?"

> <br> "Your sister's system is almost clear of the poison. She could be awake very soon," Hank said and began to rewrap Eva's hand in gauze.

> <br> "Good," she said quietly and leaned back in her chair. "Do you have a phone I can use to call my work and explain why I've been gone for -- what day is it?"

> <br> "The 14th," the professor said.

> <br> "Three days! \_Dieu! Je aux genons!\_" she hissed. She leaned her head back and stared at the ceiling as Hank continued to work on her hand. \_I'm gonna lose my fuckin' job! Damn, damn, damn!\_ she



cursed herself.

> <br> "Are you all right, Dr. Cor?" the professor asked.

> <br> "Y-yeah, an' its Eva," she stuttered and looked back at him. Hank had just finished with her hand.

> <br> "I can take you to a phone now," he said, and motioned for the door. She followed him, now in some clothes borrowed from Ororo Munroe, Remy's ex-apprentice. He led her down a long hallway to a small sitting room with a phone on of the end tables.

> <br> "Thanks," she said and the professor left her alone. She lifted the receiver and dialed slowly with her left hand. It rang twice and someone finally picked up.

> <br> "President of Iowa State University, Martian Gishke's office. Can I help you?" an all too perky and familiar voice came over the phone.

> <br> "Hi, Lola, this is Professor Cor..."

> <br> "Oh, my gosh, Eva! Are you okay? Where are you? We're all so worried!"

> <br> "I'm fine Lola, and I talk ta Mr. Gishke?"

> <br> "Y-yeah, Eva, hang on for a second." There was silence on the phone for a few moments and then someone spoke.

> <br> "Professor Cor?" a male voice asked.

> <br> "\_Oui\_, Mr. Gishke. I called ta..."

> <br> "I'm very sorry, Professor Cor, but I don't want to hear it. This has happened before, and we are sick of it. You've always been a lose cannon and this is the last straw. You've been replaced, I warned you the first itme," he said.

> <br> "R-replaced? Why?" Eva choked on her own words. She was surprised she was still standing.

> <br> "You're a danger to all of the students and faculty on this campus. All of your jobs have been re-assigned to others," Mr. Gishke said.

> <br> "Please, Martian, let me explain," Eva pleaded.

> <br> "No, I don't want to hear it. We here on the board all ignored your rather torrid past because of your high credits. We were wrong in doing so. You've proven to be a very large danger to all of here at ISU. You'll never teach again, anywhere. There is no use in appealing, either. We have approval form the state supreme court. Your licence has been revoke permanantly."

> <br> Eva couldn't speak. "I-I..."

> <br> "If that is all Professor, I have work to do," he said coldly.

> <br> "Y-yeah," Eva whispered and there was a click on the other end. Eva slowly lowered the receiver back to its resting-place.

> <br> She stood, stunned. She had worked so hard to get those jobs, so many school late nights up past midnight studying for a test that was 6 weeks away. \_NO! Oh, my God, how could I have let this happen? My whole life, everything I've worked for, its all gone! He's right, though. I am a danger, too much of a danger to everyone there. But my God, it's all gone!\_ Eva leaned onto the table to support her weakening knees. \_It can't be, it just can't! It's all a dream, another bad dream. One of many. I'll wake up soon, and that'll be it. All over\_. She began to feel dizzy.

> <br> Eva leaned onto the table with her injured hand. A sharp pain shot through her whole arm. She let out an anguished cry, and fell to her knees, cradling her hand. "\_Revez n'blesse\_", she whispered to herself. She stood up and wiped the small tears from her cheeks and walked to the door. She pushed the it open and headed back down the hall to the Med-Lab to check on her sister and get the horrible news out of her head.

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"I was hoping you could convince her to join, Marcus. All of her abilities could be a great asset to us and our struggle," Professor X said, looking over the young man who was almost a carbon copy of his oldest friend and enemy. But he couldn't possibly be related to him, it wasn't in Magnus's nature to abandon family, it was too important to him.

> <br> "I know, I was gonna try that. But she's worked so hard ta get ta where she is in the world, she might not wanna give it all up." Slip leaned back and sipped his coffee, then looked over at his unconscious sister lying on the hospital bed. "I almost know for sure that Stephanie'll join, though."

> <br> The door was wrenched open suddenly, reminiscent of Wolverine in the morning before he had his coffee, only it was Eva. She slammed the door shut behind her and slumped into one of the chairs next to Stephanie's bed, and crossed her arms crossed and her knees pulled up to her chest. Remy, who had been sleeping in the other chair next to her was quickly awakened. All three men looked at her.

> <br> "\_Merede\_, Eva, why y' gotta do dat? Gambit just startin' ta get some sleep," Gambit said and looked at her.

> <br> "Shut yer pie hole, LeBeau, I don wanna 'ear it," she hissed and closed her eyes, trying to get rid of the words Mr. Gishke had put in her mind.\_ Danger to us all, danger, danger, danger to us all...\_

> <br> "Dat hurt, \_chere\_," he said. "What's wrong?" Since when Evie get so mad? Sumtin' bigs up.

> <br> Eva opened her eyes and looked at who was in the room. She didn't want the professor to know what it was, it was too embarrassing, so she used her telepathy to talk exclusively with Slip and Gambit.

> <br> #I was fired from my job,# Eva told her brothers.

> <br> "They did WHAT?" yelled Slip, sitting up straight.

> <br> "Ya heard me," she said quietly.

> <br> Gambit put his hand on her shoulder, "Ya okay, chere?"

> <br> "Whadda ya think?" she asked him, angrily. Slip stood up and walked over to her. Gambit put his hand on her shoulder.

> <br> "Is there anything I can do?" asked the professor.

> <br> "\_Non\_," Eva whispered. Professor X left the room quietly and left them alone.

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Stephanie's eyes opened. Her whole body was heavy; her limbs so heavy she didn't think she could move them, like she was swimming in cold peanut butter. The room was white, a blinding white to her eyes. A loud, resilient beeping filled her ears.

> <br> Her eyes strained to the left; there was a heart monitor, and more white walls. The bed she was in was far too nice for Sinister. It was soft, warm; all in all very nice. Her eyes strained to the right; there were monitors. She didn't recognize what they were for, but it couldn't be Sinister. Everything was too comfortable. There was a person, sitting; all she could see was a pair of legs from her view, but she wasn't alone. There was a snore, and she thought she recognized it, only one person in the world she knew of snored like that: her brother, Remy.

> <br> She tried to move. She lifted her arm up and reached out for whoever it was next to her bed. He was too far away. Her arm dropped limply from lack of energy and muscle, being locked up for two years she didn't get much exercise. \_Please wake up, whoever ya are\_ she

pleaded in her mind. She opened her mouth and called out softly, "H--hello?" Whoever was next to her was snapped up in a second. He looked over to her. His face was familiar to her like that of her own.

> <br> "Stephie!" he cried, grabbed her hand and knelt next the bed.

> <br> "R-remy, it's you. Oh, I'm so happy," she said softly and squeezed his hand. Her eyes began to feel heavy and began to slowly close. Sleep was back to reclaim her.

> <br> "I gotta go get an' Hank an' Evie," he said, "Don' go 'way." He kissed her hand and took off out of the room.

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Professor X sighed and looked at Eva, whom was sitting with her brother Slip and Storm in one of the mansion's many sitting rooms, form the doorway. Whatever it was that had been said to her on the phone, it had hit her very hard. He wondered if she would be all right. She wasn't weak, he could tell by her demeanor. But this had cut through her hard. He sighed and figured now was as good a time as any to ask her about joining. He had to be wary of her emotional condition, however, so he decided to ask Slip first.

> <br> #Marcus?# He connected their minds.

> <br> #Yes, sir?# He seemed pleasant enough.

> <br> #I was wondering if I could speak to Eva, if she is feeling up to it. #

> <br> Slip chuckled in his mind, #'Ro and I have already talked to her 'bout joinin', an' she said yes. Turns out the university fired her 'cause she was too much of a danger. #

> <br> #That's awful! Is she alright?#

> <br> #She's been through worse...# Slip was cut off by Gambit, who came flying into the room, nearly knocking the Professor over and tripping over the door frame.

> <br> "Gambit, whatever is..." the Professor began.

> <br> "What is it, Rem'?" asked Slip, turning around.

> <br> "Stephie's awake!" he sputtered, trying to catch his breath.

> <br> "Omigod!" Eva cried and jumped up. She, Gambit, and Slip took of down the hall to the med-lab.

> <br> When they arrived in the med-lab, Hank was taking Stephanie's vital signs and explaining to her what had happened to her. She was sitting up and looked as though she was wide-awake. The three ran into the med-lab and a general chaos ensued of yelling, hugging, French-Cajun, and crying. Storm and the Professor waited in the doorway.

> <br> "This is quite sentimental," he said, not realizing how long Stephanie had been prisoner.

> <br> "Well, Charles, Stephanie has been a prisoner of Sinister since before I met Marcus and Remy," she said, observing the emotions in the room.

> <br> "Oh, my, I had no idea," Professor X said, embarrassed at his lack of knowledge of his own students.

> <br> Eva put her hand in Stephanie's, "Are you Okay, Steph?"

> <br> "Oh, Lord, I haven't felt this good in forever. Sinister told me killed all of ya."

> <br> "An' we thought he killed you. It kinda evens out," said Remy with his patented cure-all-blues-smile.

> <br> "Seriously, Steph, are ya okay? Are ya in any pain 'r discomfort?" asked Eva, "I need ta know."

> <br> "Well, I'm tired an' stiff. All my bones ache an' my head,

too," Stephanie said.

> <br> "As much as I hate to interrupt, I need to examine Miss Cor immediately. With the drug in her system we need to take care of any problems now, or they can get worse, fast," Hank said standing at the end of the bed. "And our favorite patient needs her rest, so do the rest of you, I know none of you have slept in for at least the last 24 hours," he added.

> <br> "Yeah, got dat right, Hankie," said Gambit.

> <br> "Ya were just sleepin'. Anyway, ya'll go an' get some rest, I don' wan' ya up on my part," Stephanie said looking at her brothers and sister.

> <br> "Yeah, ya'll run along an' Hank an' I'll work on Stephie," Eva said. The boys nodded and said their good-byes as they reluctantly stalked out of the room for their beckoning beds.

> <br> Eva looked back and saw Storm and the Professor, "Come 'er, ya two," she said and motioned to the Professor and Storm. They came over.

> <br> "Stephie, this is Ororo Munroe, Remy's ex-apprentice." Eva motioned to Storm, and Storm nodded in acknowledgment. "And this is Professor Charles Xavier, this is his school."

> <br> "Hello, Miss Cor," the professor said.

> <br> "\_Allo\_," she smiled and shook hands with them. "An' its Stephanie, or Steph."

> <br> "Well, we must let you and Henry get to work," said Storm.

> <br> "Nice ta met ya," Stephanie said as they walked out.

> <br> Hank came back into the room with a tray of different tools. He set them on the table next to the bed, "Shall we then?"

> <br> Eva began, "Yeah, we should take some blood samples first, then..."

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Eva stuffed the two last shirts she was taking with her into the suitcase. \_That's it, finally. I thought I'd never get done.\_ Eva latched the suitcase and put it next to the others. She walked to her bedroom window and gazed over the Ames' low skyline. She leaned onto the windowsill. She smiled to herself. \_I sure am gonna miss it 'ere. Everyone's so friendly. But it's not as nice as North Bend.\_

> <br> She sighed at the thought of her old hometown in Nova Scotia, Canada. Everyone was so nice there, in a town of little over one thousand everybody knew everybody. \_I should go there and see moma, she thought, I haven't been up there since we ran away. My God, when we were 14, that was 13 years ago. What kinda daughter am I? She died bringin' us into the world, an' I don' even go up ta visit 'er grave. I hate myself! I should go and see Mia's grave, too. She tried, and did her best for us she could. \_

> <br> Eva looked at the Star of David around her neck. It was her mother's. On the back was an inscription, ((Ariel I love you Erik)). Erik. My father, that bastard. \_He left my mother when she needed him most. I'll kill 'im. Love indeed, that liar. I hate him!\_

> <br> She shook her head to try and get rid of the bad thoughts, the thoughts of her mother's death and Mia's and of her father and how he abandoned her mother pregnant in Russia. \_I won't cry over it tonight. I won't ever again. It's done an' over. I can't do nothin' about it. I won't cry.\_ It didn't work. Slowly and silently the tears made their way down her face. Eva pulled the blinds shut and walked over to her bed. Using her powers to control magnetism she flipped the light switch off, then cried herself to sleep, and promised herself that she'd go and visit he Mother and Aunt ASAP.

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\_God, why in the 'ell can't I sleep? Am I that worked up over everything I can't even sleep?\_ Eva sighed and sat up. She'd fallen asleep for a bit, when she was crying, but when she was all cried out, she'd woken back up.

> <br> Eva slipped out of bed and softly tiptoed through the room into the barren living room. She'd given all of her furniture to several friends. She opened the sliding glass door that lead to the balcony and stepped out. The air was near freezing in March and the wind whipped at her face. Her knee length wavy, white-blonde hair swept around her.

> <br> She wrapped her arms around herself and gazed blankly over the sky. Then it occurred to her: Why not make use of her abilities? She lifted her arms and used her powers to lift her self into the air. She sat suspended in the air for the moment; her eyes scanned the land and buildings. She sighed and slipped down from the sky and back to her balcony. She was still not used to using her powers.

> <br> She went into her room and dressed. Then picked up her suit cases and carried them down to her car, then returned back to her apartment and picked up the phone. She dialed her brother. The phone rang twice and the answering machine picked up.

> <br> "\_Allo\_, you've reached Marcus Cor, I'm not 'er right now, but if ya leave a message I'll get back ta ya ASAP if I'm still alive." There was no joking tone in his voice as there would normally be with anyone else.

> <br> Eva chuckled to herself at the message and how true it was. Any other person wouldn't get it unless they knew his line of work. There was a beep and Eva spoke, "Nice message, Markie. I called ta tell ya I'm takin' a little detour on the way up there, so, I'll be 'bout three days later then I said, so don't worry about me. Love ya, bye." She put the phone down and headed for the door. She took one last look around and sighed. "I gotta let go. I got a better life ahead me now," she told herself as she walked away and to the garage.

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Eva approached the headstones slowly and cautiously, preparing herself for the impending flood of emotions and memories that were sure to come. She was close to them now; so close she could touch them. Two weathered, cold, hard, granite blocks that were pathetically immortalizing her family. She reached out and ran her hand along the Star of David carved into her mother Ariel's headstone. She'd always done that when she had come to visit before. She held back the tears as best she could.

> <br> "I'm so sorry Moma, it's been so long. I hope ya're all right, mi mere. I've been okay, I guess," she sighed as the tears began to escape. She read the epitaph on the stone.

> <br>

> "Ariel Margot Cor<br> Born April 16, 1935

> Died January 22, 1972<br> Beloved daughter, sister, and friend

> May you rest in peace"<br>

> Eva shuddered at the thoughts that flooded her mind. <em>It's all our fault. We killed her when we came out of her. It was us. She fought her mind. No, no, it's not my fault, not anyone's fault. It happens all of the time. It's the risk she took having us. It's no one's fault. We didn't kill her. No. No. No.<em> Eva knelt down and ran her fingers over the name Ariel on the headstone.

> <br> "I am so sorry Moma. I didn't mean ta hurt ya. Forgive me

please, Moma." She sat for a moment and stared at the headstone and then stood up. She turned her eyes over to Mia's headstone and was silent for a moment and then spoke.

> <br> "Ya tried ta take care a us the best that ya could, Aunt Mia, an' I love ya for it. But you're a bitch Mia, such a bitch. Ya were a weak pathetic idiot bitch who couldn't find anyway out but ta drink an' 'it us. I hate ya for that. Ya were the only one in the world we had an', ya didn't even care!" Eva realized she was screaming her words. She sighed and shuddered. There was an elderly couple on the sidewalk staring at her; they walked quickly away when she looked back and saw them. She turned back to the headstones.

> <br> She stared for a moment at Mia's headstone and her mind reeled as she remembered Mia's abuse. The whippings, the days locked in their room with no food. She could feel the belt in the skin of her back as she stood there and the pang of hunger in her stomach.

> <br> "Ma'am?" a voice came from behind her. Eva turned around and jammed her bandaged hand into her pocket, A short, plump woman with bouncy red curls stood behind her. The woman pulled her jacket tight around herself and stared at Eva for a moment, as if trying to remember something. "Stephanie? Eva? Is the you?" she asked, her face turning to a slight smile.

> <br> Eva was hesitant; the woman didn't look familiar. "\_O\_-\_oui\_, its Eva, do I know ya?"

> <br> "Its Shirley, Shirley Frey. Remember me?" The woman took a step forward.

> <br> Eva remembered, "Oh, my God, Shirley, I didn't recognize ya." Eva smiled slightly, "How have ya been?" \_Shirley, perfect timing.\_

> <br> "My, God, Eva, I haven't seen or heard from you in 13, 14 years. How have you been?"

> <br> "O-okay," Eva replied. She was not in the mood to make small talk with her old baby-sitter.

> <br> "I am sorry, Eva. You were in the middle of something. I'll go and leave you. Perhaps we could meet for coffee?"

> <br> "Um, yeah, sure, I guess. when an' where?" Eva asked.

> <br> "Shay's Coffee shop, right where it always has been, at 1:00, okay?" Shirley said, "Until then?"

> <br> "Until then," Eva said. Shirley smiled and walked away form the cemetery and back to the battered old Volvo station wagon in the driveway.

> <br> Eva turned back to the headstones and sighed. She thought again of Mia. She could hear Mia's slurred yelling and could smell the alcohol and cigarettes. She could see the blood on the floor from the cuts Mia had inflicted upon her and her brother and sister's bodies. She could hear the cries of her sister and brother; the words of disbelief from the teachers at school and the pastor at the church in town. 'Mia couldn't of something like that,' they all said.

> <br> She shook away all of the memories and buried them deep within her again as she had done all of the time. Her telepathic powers made it easy to put up shields that would hide the memories form herself, from others, and from Sinister. The memories were gone now, hidden away until they boiled over again.

> <br> Eva looked at the stones again and spoke, "I am sorry, both of ya, I never meant ta hurt ya. Moma, Aunt Mia. I love ya both. Mia, I'm sorry." Why am I apologizing? She the on who hurt us! No! Yes! No! Yes!

> <br> "Arrrrgghhh!" Eva clutched her head and shook it violently. The voices in her head screamed at each other. Blue electricity crackled around her and she screamed. The shields she had put up weren't enough. All of the feelings for herself, Moma, and Mia came spilling

out and it was almost too much. In her mind she struggled to get the shields back up, and she did just before her powers leveled the whole town. She collapsed to her knees and panted. She was physically and mentally exhausted. She stood up uneasily and looked back at the headstones.

> <br> "I love ya both. I miss ya both. I hope ya're okay. This is good-bye again, I guess. I love ya."

> <br> Eva turned and walked slowly back across the grass to her car and slipped inside. She leaned on the steering wheel for a moment and then started the car. She pulled down main drag of town road and into a run-down old motel. She checked into the smallest, cheapest room and fell asleep on the stained, dirty bed.

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"I am dead serious. Their powers, their looks, for god's sake they're Jewish, too. What more proof do we need?" Bobby queried, his frustration evident.

> <br> "Is it any of our business who their father is?" asked Jean.

> <br> "When it's a monster like him, yes," Warren said.

> <br> "He is not a monstah," Rogue said.

> <br> "I'd have to disagree, my dear. He is very much a threat," Hank concluded.

> <br> "There is not a point to this. I know Marcus very well, and he is no threat to us. He does not even know who his father is, and he has no connections to..."

> <br> "He's a loner, you don't know everything 'bout him, Ro. I know the type," said Wolverine and sucked the end of his cigar. "I am the type."

> <br> "Ve should not even be arguing about this. It's none of our business whom zer father is," Nightcrawler said. "Vhat would the Professor say about this?"

> <br> "That it's a just concern," Cyclops said. "What if the are working with him?"

> <br> "They most certainly are not!" Storm said.

> <br> "We trusted him an' that swamp rat before. What's so different now?" Rogue asked.

> <br> "More has been brought into view, we have a clearer picture. With Marcus it was a coincidence, now with Eva and Stephanie, its more likely not to be. He already has one set of twins, it could be some sort of family trait," Cyclops said.

> <br> "His wife's dead," Rogue said.

> <br> "Too true, my dear, but in the world of mutant genetics that might not matter. His mutant gene could have an affect on the embryos, and that could result in a number of," he cleared his throat, "abnormalities," Hank said.

> <br> "They are not 'abnormalities'," Storm said.

> <br> "Once again, should we even be talking about this? I don't care right now, and I don't wanna think about him and some woman," Morph said, half joking.

> <br> "I am starting to agree whole heartedly," said Warren. "That's the last thing I want to think of."

> <br> "Well, mah ego goes up," Rogue said quietly.

> <br> "Let's just all drop this and eat already. Bobby's patented macaroni and cheese is going to waste," Jubilee said sarcastically.

> <br> "Aw, shuddap, will ya?" Bobby said and aimed a spoonful at her.

> <br> "Still the child among us, eh, Mr. Drake?" Hank said. A glop

of cheese and noodles hit Hank square in the chest. Then a large snow ball...

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Eva pulled her car up to the gates of Professor Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters. They were large wrought iron, and twisted into somewhat of a swirling pattern. She leaned out of her window to a small communication panel. She did as Slip had taught her and pushed the button to ask for authorization. It beeped and an almost human voice came through. "State name and authorization code."

> <br> "Um," Eva pulled a piece of paper from her pocket and read it, "Cor, Eva. 3220."

> <br> "Authorization accepted." There was a buzz and the gates opened and she drove down the driveway. The gates slammed behind her as she continued forward. She stopped her car outside the large, imposing brick building and stepped out. She looked over the building and sighed. She saw a face looking at her from one of the windows. It was Jubilee, the youngest X-Man. The large oak doors opened and Stephanie came out, followed closely by Professor Xavier. Home.

> <br> "Welcome home, Eva," Professor Xavier said as he approached her. Eva hugged her sister and then shook hands with the professor.

> <br> "Home," Eva whispered and shook her head.

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Erik shuffled the papers on his desk. He pushed them into a random file. He buried his head in his hands. He was so tired. His whole life had been work and nothing but trouble. This wasn't how it was supposed to be. He was supposed to be with his wife, but she was gone. He knew that for sure, long dead. If not her, then Ariel. He missed her so much, his lovely Russian \_fiancÃ©\_. He reached for an overturned picture frame and picked it up. The woman in the picture was not young, but not old either. Though the picture was black and white, you could see her blonde hair and pale ivory skin dotted with light brown freckles. She was perched on a split rail fence and looking smiling over her shoulder in a long cotton dress topped with a peasant's straw hat.

> <br> Erik smiled at the thoughts of the day he took that picture; how happy she had been when he asked her to marry him. "I miss you terribly, Ariel," he whispered and kissed the picture. He placed it back down, this time facing up so he could see her. He stared at the picture for a moment and thoughts of her home in Russia came to him. How beautiful it was there and how much they had shared there. Then he thought of the last time he was there, in March, he thought. He thought long and hard for a moment then he decided what he would do. He pressed a button on his phone. There was a buzz.

> <br> A voice came from the speaker on the phone, "Yes?"

> <br> "I'm taking a vacation, Fabian. You're in charge."

> <br> "Yes, sir," the man barked obediently. Erik took his finger off of the button and headed for the door, determined at no matter what the cost to find his lost love, or at least what became of her.

The End

End  
file.